

rate single program transport stream extracted from the statistically multiplexed MPEG transport stream are input at the constant bit rate as soon as possible after a specified time interval before they are to be decoded — preferably at least a fixed number of seconds prior to the

5 decode time. The constant bit rate single program transport stream is transferred to the decoder when needed to be decoded, and in the event of buffer overflow B-type pictures are replaced with null B-type pictures until the overflow ceases, and the prior picture is repeated by the decoder.